



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Success !

A First for Alaska Fishery Restoration

In December 2002, when winter snows and subzero temperatures minimize the impact of heavy equipment upon riverbank riparian vegetation and downstream fish habitat, contractors will remove the sheet pile that blocks the 75-foot channel of the Chatanika River, a major Yukon river tributary 70 miles east of Fairbanks. The blockage, which has prevented chinook and chum salmon, Arctic grayling, sheefish and other fish from reaching their historic spawning and rearing grounds for some 70 years, will reconnect 170 stream miles in this 90,000-acre watershed, once removed. The project, spearheaded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fish Passage Program and funded jointly by the Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Marine Fisheries Service and the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association, is believed to be the first dam removal undertaken in Alaska to help restore a fishery.